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11 MAY 1960

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Honorable Chester Bowles
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Chet:

I very much appreciate your letter of May 4 transmitting the report of a luncheon conversation you had on April 22nd.

I read your report with a great deal of interest and have taken the liberty of sending copies of it on to some of our people here who I know will also be very much interested in reading it.

With best wishes.

Faithfully yours,

Allen W. Dulles
Director

O/DCI/██████████:rad 6 May 60

Rewritten: FMC:rad 9 May 60

Distribution:

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CHESTER BOWLES
2nd DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

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COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Executive Registry

66-3235

May 4, 1960

Dear Allen:

You may be interested in the enclosed report of a conversation I had with Ambassador Menshikov a week or so ago. I assume that the purpose of the invitation for luncheon was to secure some political background on differences that might exist between the two parties in the handling of foreign affairs.

I think I persuaded him, at least to some degree, that the important thing is the very great similarity that exists, and that a new Democratic administration would carry on along the same general lines, with certainly no less toughness on the essential points.

With my warmest regards,

Sincerely,



Chester Bowles

Enclosure

The Honorable Allen Dulles
2430 E Street, N.W.
Washington 25, D.C.

Copy

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CHESTER BOWLES, M.C.

Report of Conversation
Mikhail A. Menshikov, Ambassador
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
April 22, 1960

Some time ago Ambassador Menshikov invited Mrs. Bowles and me to dinner at the Soviet Embassy. Because of a heavy evening schedule, it was impossible to work out a date. Shortly thereafter he followed the invitation with an invitation to luncheon at the Embassy, which I accepted.

I did so reluctantly because a similar luncheon a year ago was a waste of time, and indeed rather unpleasant, with the Ambassador both belligerent and uncommunicative. However, I did not want him to feel that I was unwilling to talk with him, so I accepted the invitation for April 22nd.

The Ambassador was accompanied by a man in his thirties, whose name I did not get, but whom he described as "first counselor" who had been in the United States only two months.

Mr. Menshikov was much more outgoing than on the previous occasion. He was in excellent humor and prepared to talk on almost any subject.

His purpose, as I expected, was to secure some understanding of what a Democratic Administration's position might be on foreign policy, ranging from disarmament to India, where the Ambassador served as Ambassador immediately after I left in 1953.

Unlike the earlier meeting, Menshikov was in no way abusive or belligerently critical of American policy. On several occasions he took care to "correct" statements of mine. This however was done with moderation. It was clear that he was anxious to leave an impression of personal good will and reasonableness.

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The only stern note appeared in his criticism of Doug Dillon's recent New York speech, and to a lesser degree of one by Chris Herter. When I suggested that they were simply balancing the off-and-on belligerence of Khrushchev, he dropped the subject with a shrug.

During the course of the luncheon, I emphasized that an extraordinary degree of agreement existed between those leaders of the Democratic and Republican parties who were most directly interested in foreign policy. This agreement was reflected in the fact that the candidates for the Presidency -- Republican and Democratic -- take much the same view on such questions as Defense, disarmament negotiations, United States relations with Europe, NATO, economic assistance, anti-colonialism, etc.

I suggested that Mr. Khrushchev should not only welcome the existence of this general consensus but genuinely hope that America would continue to solve her internal problems, including matters of internal economic development, race relations, and the rest. Such an America, I said, would be a confident and affirmative nation, and hence in a far better position to negotiate on the deep-seated differences which divided our governments.

I added that it was to the Soviet's advantage, as well as to our own, that Europe developed an increasing unity and sense of common purpose. Thus the Soviet Union, instead of looking at the conflict between the Outer Seven and the Common Market as advantageous to its interests, should hope that the differences between the two groups can be resolved.

Similarly, I suggested that we Americans had a stake in political stability within the Soviet Union, as this might lead to a general mellowing of official as well as public attitudes and increased confidence in dealing with the outside world.

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The Ambassador said that he understood my view but that America appeared to be seeking conflict between Russia and China. I replied that this reaction was natural in view of some of the statements which Lenin and Stalin made years ago and which the government in Peking is now repeating in new contexts.

I added that as confidence grew between the United States and the Soviet Union, many Americans might see a new advantage in the ability of the Soviet to maintain its influence in China, as this might help to modify Chinese recklessness and antagonism and persuade her to forego any effort to expand into Southeast Asia, which would certainly lead to war. Essential to the development of this broader viewpoint, however, is a greater understanding and more mutual confidence between Moscow and Washington.

I also stressed the strong feeling in the Democratic Party that in the absence of a disarmament program with reliable controls, it was essential for America to maintain a strong defense. It would be reasonable for the Soviet Union, I added, to take a similar position.

I referred to the disastrous effect of the Washington Arms Treaty in 1922 which left the Imperial Japanese Navy in control of the western Pacific and thereby lead first to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1932 and later to the invasion of China, Southeast Asia, and finally to Pearl Harbor.

I emphasized, however, that our greater emphasis on military preparedness did not imply that the Democrats would not strongly support every practical effort toward a meaningful disarmament program. What is needed

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is a breakthrough on the science as well as the politics of control and detection, and here scientists should cooperate fully.

In regard to Berlin, I said that I personally would be opposed to change of any kind at this time. I added that the NATO troops there are symbolic and their number, therefore, was incidental. The number would become significant only if it were increased or decreased.

He then mentioned the difference between the American and the British view of the Common Market. I suggested that the British approached the question from their historic perspective which lead them to oppose any strong or potentially strong power combination on the continent. We approach the Common Market not simply as a means of greater economic development in Western Europe but far more important, as the only practical means of keeping Germany from floating into an isolated position which would be dangerous to us all. The safest place for Germany is as an integrated member of the European Community.

I also suggested that much more care should be given to regional disarmament efforts or at least programs to moderate the arms load in specific areas -- in the Middle East, for instance, and even in the broad area from the Urals to the Atlantic (in line with the article I wrote for The New York Times last fall.)

I stressed on several occasions that I was offering simply my own views as an individual, although I felt that they were not too different from those of most Americans who were concerned with these questions and who are familiar with their implications.

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The atmosphere throughout was relaxed and cordial. Many of the things which I said would have been challenged belligerently at the luncheon last spring. On this occasion he allowed them to pass by without challenge.

Washington, D.C.
May 2, 1960

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